



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: July 12, 2006

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XVI: Consideration of resolution authorizing acceptance of trail and conservation easements and trail construction funds from Mountaingate project Tract Map No. 53072 and entering into agreements to receive said resources, Bundy Canyon watershed, Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acceptance of trail and conservation easements and trail planning/design/construction funds from the developers of Tract Map No. 53072 in Bundy Canyon and entering into agreements to receive said resources.

Background: Tract Map No. 53072 is the last phase of the greater Mountaingate project that by road connects to Sepulveda Boulevard and is located between Mandeville Canyon and the 405 Freeway. This final project phase involves 29 large single family lots and approximately 300 acres of open space. Community organizations, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) have spent the past year forging a compromise to address both the continuity and quality of two trails that go through the project area. This process has been coordinated by the 11th Council District staff. Although there is litigation involved between a non-profit organization, the City of Los Angeles, and the developer (Castle and Cook), it appears that a settlement of all the issues will be reached this week.

The MRCA will receive two trail easements. One (Canyonback Trail) easement is located on the ridgeline between Bundy and Mandeville Canyons. The second easement (Bundy Canyon-Mount Saint Mary's Trail) extends from the eastern ridge of Bundy Canyon to the western ridge to connect to the Canyonback Trail. The developer would build the subject Canyonback Trail segment.

The MRCA will receive approximately \$240,000 to do all design, environmental clearance, and construction on the Bundy Canyon trail. Three geologists hired by the developer, the adjoining homeowners association, and the MRCA have all

looked at the trail feasibility. The MRCA has also hired a civil engineer throughout this process.

The MRCA will also receive between \$7,500 - \$10,000 annually for the life of the housing tract for trail maintenance. This funding will come from the new homeowners association.

The MRCA will also be able to accept conservation easements over several open space lots totaling over 300 acres.

Attorneys are working on an agreement to be signed by all the parties involved. One stipulation is that the MRCA (and all other signatories) express support for the project if the agreement provides for all of the interests and resources outlined above. Staff is comfortable with that role. The development area is only about 15 percent of the total project acreage, and the settlement solves all regional trail and public access needs. A final wrap up meeting is scheduled right before the MRCA meeting, and the Los Angeles City Council Planning and Land Use Committee meeting is scheduled for July 25th. The trail and conservation easements and funding would all transfer approximately 45 days after the expected final City Council action on August 1st.